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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. STEVENS).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, ADM Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Lord God almighty, You have made all the people of this Earth for Your glory. Yet, too often we choose our own destructive paths. Deliver our own world from hatred, cruelty, and revenge. Save us from violence, discord, confusion, and sin. Guide and bless our Senators that their labors will please You and be a blessing to the nations of the Earth. May we be a people at peace among ourselves and determined to be Your instruments of reconciliation. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable TED STEVENS led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RECOGNITION OF THE ACTING MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BROWNBACK). The Senator from Kentucky is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, this morning the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 11, the Patients First Act. Between now and 11:30, the time will be equally divided between the majority leader or his designee, and the Democratic leader or his designee.

At 11:30, there will be two consecutive rollcall votes. The first vote will be on the motion to invoke cloture on the motion to proceed to the Patients First Act of 2003. Immediately fol-

lowing that vote, the Senate will proceed to executive session and vote on the nomination of Victor Wolski to be a judge on the U.S. Federal Claims Court.

Following those two votes, at 11:30, the Senate will begin consideration of S. 925, the State Department reauthorization bill. Amendments are expected to be offered to the bill. However, it is our hope, and the hope of Chairman LUGAR, to complete this bill expeditiously. To accomplish this, Members who intend to offer and debate amendments should notify their respective chairman or ranking member so that the amendments can be scheduled for consideration.

Rollcall votes will occur throughout the day as the Senate considers the State Department authorization bill.

Again, it is our hope that we will be able to complete this bill early this week so we can begin the appropriations process prior to the end of this week. I encourage everyone to help make that possible.

RECOGNITION OF THE ACTING MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada is recognized.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, if I may direct a question through the Chair to the distinguished majority whip, what is the pleasure of the majority leader as to what we are going to do on Friday? Is there a determination yet as to whether we are going to have votes on Friday?

Mr. MCCONNELL. It is my understanding that the leader does expect there will be votes on Friday. We anticipate being on one of the appropriations bills.

Mr. REID. I certainly have no prior knowledge about amendments being offered on the very important State Department authorization bill. But I think it will be difficult to finish the bill by tomorrow evening. If that is

what the leader wants to do, we will certainly try.

As I indicated, I don't know what amendments will be offered. We will have a better idea before we get on the bill, and we will inform Senator BIDEN and let him know what amendments there are, so the leader can have an idea as to what the week holds for us in that regard.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I think the plan of Senator FRIST is to get started and see how it goes and to hope that we can move that bill rapidly.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, if it would be OK, the time, as the Senator from Kentucky has indicated, is evenly divided—the Chair will announce it shortly—until about 11:10; is that true?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. That is correct.

Mr. REID. One-half hour of the time we are allotted I will yield to the Senator from New York, Mr. SCHUMER, to speak on Judge Wolski.

I have been advised by staff that 25 minutes would be adequate because he has 5 minutes prior to the vote. So I will yield 25 minutes to the Senator from New York.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, leadership time is reserved.

PATIENTS FIRST ACT OF 2003—MOTION TO PROCEED

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration on the motion to proceed to the consideration of S. 11. Under the previous order, the time until 11:30 a.m. will be equally divided between the majority leader and the minority leader or their designees.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, the measure we are hoping to proceed to, the Patients First Act of 2003, seeks to

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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